

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A pointing device comprising:

a puck sub-assembly comprising:

a moveable puck confined to move within a puck field of motion; and

a support member having an opening therein that determines a boundary for said puck field of motion;

a base sub-assembly comprising:

a base surface over which said puck moves; and

a position detector that measures the position of said puck in said puck field of motion; and

an attachment mechanism for connecting said base sub-assembly to said puck sub-assembly such that said puck sub-assembly is reversibly separable from said base assembly, and said base surface is accessible when said puck sub-assembly is separated from said base assembly.

2. The pointing device of Claim 1 wherein said moveable puck includes a user sensor that detects the interaction of a user and said puck.

3. The pointing device of Claim 1 wherein base sub-assembly is separable from said base sub-assembly without the use of tools.

4. The pointing device of Claim 1 wherein said puck sub-assembly further comprises a restoring mechanism that returns said puck to a predetermined area in said puck field of motion.

5. The pointing device of Claim 4 wherein said restoring mechanism comprises a spring connected to said puck.

5 6. The pointing device of Claim 1 wherein said support member further comprises a first contact that mates with a corresponding second contact in said base sub-assembly for making an electrical connection between said puck and said base sub-assembly.

10 7. The pointing device of Claim 6 wherein said puck is electrically connected to said first contact through a spring that returns said puck to a predetermined area in said puck field of motion.

8. The pointing device of Claim 1 wherein said position sensor comprises a plurality of surface electrodes on said surface and a puck electrode that moves with said puck.

15 9. The pointing device of Claim 1 wherein said base sub-assembly is attached to a portable host apparatus.

10. The pointing device of Claim 1 wherein said base sub-assembly is integral with a portable host apparatus.